Indian Coast Guards and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency to, *inter alia*, discuss the Memorandum of Understanding for establishing communication link between them and to set up a mechanism to deal with the issue of apprehended fishermen effectively and speedily.

Again, during the Foreign Secretary level talks held on December 27-28, 2004 at Islamabad it was agreed that consular access would be given to all the civilian prisoners (including fishermen) held in each other's country within three months from the date of their arrest and repatriation would be done immediately after completion of sentence and nationality verification.

During the visit of External Affairs Minister to Pakistan from February 15-17, 2005 the issue of early release and repatriation of all the Indian fishermen along with their boats was again taken up.

The Government is constantly in touch with the Government of Pakistan for early release and repatriation of the Indian fishermen and their boats. Pakistan government has released 266 Indian fishermen on January 06, 2005 and 528 fishermen on March 22, 2005.

Group 'A' Services in BSNL/MTNL

*418. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government considers Telecom as a specialized Department;

(b) if so, the steps being taken to ensure its specialized character after the option of absorption is offered to the specialized Group 'A' services in the BSNL/MTNL;

(c) if not, the steps being taken so that it becomes a specialized department especially in wake of some Telecom operators grossly violating Government license regulations;

(d) whether Government have considered the need of a proper specialized Government monitoring system; and

(e) if so, how Government plans to monitor the huge and burgeoning Telecom network across the country to ensure that security of the country is not jeopardized?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) to (e) In order to promote rapid development in all aspects of telecommunications including technology, production and services, the Govérnment of India after careful consideration decided in April 1989 to establish a Telecom Commission with full executive and financial powers. The Telecom Commission is part of the Department of Telecommunications. There is no proposal to change the present character of this Department as on date.

The Government has already set up a Vigilance Monitoring Division with regional offices for monitoring of telecom networks across the country. Violation of licence regulations is dealt as per terms & conditions of licence. The licencing conditions provide for facilities for monitoring of telecommunication traffic by law enforcement agencies.

Running of Parallel Telephone Exchanges

†*419. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that a people are running parallet telephone exchanges in the country which is causing heavy losses of revenue to Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether an inquiry has been conducted in this regard; and

(d) if so, the action taken against the persons found guilty in the inquiry?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Based on source information/or information provided by security agencies, Vigilance Telecom Monitoring Units of Department of Telecommunications, along with security agencies have curbed many illegal grey market telephone setups in the country, as soon as they have been detected.

(b) As on date 284 illegal grey market telephone setups have been detected and raided all over India. The year-wise breakup of the cases is as shown below:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.